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HINTS,
ON THE
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

==
BY JOHN FAWCETT, A. M.
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Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.	PAUL.
Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.	JUV.

FOURTH EDITION.



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Gen. Lee. Searbolt 21 May 30 Fritchold = Vol. 4

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO; AND WHEN
HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.

Gen. Lee. Searbolt 21 May 30 Fritchold = Vol. 4

Genl. Searcy

concerned for the welfare and salvation of his own soul, would, in the next place, be deeply affected about the salvation of his children, and use his best endeavours to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But I fear this is not always the case.

It is true, the work is arduous, and attended with great difficulty ; not only on account of the many bad examples which are continually before the eyes of children, but on account of the evil propensities of their natures. We are informed in the divine word, that they are born like a wild ass's colt, and as soon as they are capable, go astray, speaking lies. A child left to himself, to walk in the way of his own heart, will most surely bring his mother to shame, by his evil practices.

He that would train up a child in the right way, ought most certainly, to be in that way himself. The fear of God should govern his own heart, and the love of Christ should constrain him to all holy obedience to the commands of God. The work to which he is here called, requires self-government, great wisdom, and discretion, a large measure of fortitude and patience, together with continual watchfulness, care and diligence. Nor is this the business of the father only ; the mother is equally concerned ; and all those to whom the education of children is intrusted, in the absence of their parents. To educate is to rear up ; and if to rear a large and substantial edifice requires great care and attention, how much more attention and care are necessary in rearing a family to honour and usefulness in
this

his world, and to everlasting happiness in the next ! God says to fathers and mothers, as *Pharaoh's* daughter said concerning the infant *Moses*, " Take this child and nurse it for me ;" or, as in the words before us, " Train up the child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

The foundation of this work must be laid in tender years. The subject to be trained is *a child* ; begin your pious exertions betimes, that the work may be carried on successfully. Childhood is the age of vanity. " Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction," i. e. proper discipline, " will drive it far from him." The child is born into a world full of sins and snares ; all possible care should be used to keep him from falling into them. He must be instructed, he must be catechised, as some render the word, he must be trained. A young colt, unaccustomed to the bit, the reins, and the saddle, must be trained to them by skilful management. A youth destined for the army, is at first unacquainted with every thing belonging to a military life ; but he must be trained, by a skilful officer, to regulate his motions, to handle his arms, to keep his post, to perform his exercise ; to obey the word of command, and to perform all the duties of a soldier. To every part of this, skilful training is necessary ; and when this is done effectually, the man will never totally forget what he has been thus taught. This may serve to illustrate the meaning of the text. The figure is singularly striking.

If we wish to know in what kind of exercise o

employ the child is to be trained, we are told in a few words. Train him up in *the way he should go*; not in the way of the multitude; for, "Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil;" not in the way he *would go*, to which his nature is inclined; for that would be the way of folly and destruction; but train him up in the way he *should go*; the way which is right, which the Almighty has set before us in his word, and in which all good men esteem it their duty to be found. Train him up in the knowledge and practice of what is truly good; and though the work be arduous, there is reason to hope, it will, sooner or later, be attended with desirable effects; for *when he is old, he will not depart from it*. Too much is not to be attributed to the means, but you are encouraged to hope for the Divine blessing to attend your honest endeavours.

SECTION I.

On this Subject, I shall crave the Reader's Attention to the following Particulars.

1. **T**RAIN up a child in the knowledge and service of God. This should be your first care, and prevailing concern. The way he should go is not surely the way of ignorance, of irreligion, of forgetting the God that made him, and of disregarding the word and gospel of that Almighty Redeemer, who only can save him.

You, who are a father, have been the instrument
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of introducing your children into being. You need not wonder that their nature is debased and corrupted, for they are the offspring of degenerate parents; and "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" The world, into which you have been a means of bringing them, is a world of sin, of snares, and of dangers; a world in which they are surrounded with thousands of temptations, and multitudes of evil examples. Your children are destined to a state of existence beyond the grave. The word of the living God most positively assures you, that if they die in impenitence and unbelief, without the knowledge, the fear and love of God, and an interest in the redemption that is by Jesus Christ, they must inevitably perish. Is not this a serious, a most weighty concern; Your children are committed to your care. But for what end? That you should train them up in the way they should go, in order, through divine mercy, that they may serve and glorify God in this world, and be happy for ever with him in that which is to come. It is the express command of their Maker and Sovereign, who has committed them to your care, that you should bring them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4.

The meaning of this is, not only that you should bring up your children in such a knowledge of books, men and things, as may fit them to appear in life, with honour and usefulness; but that you should train them in such a course of discipline and instruction, as properly belongs to a religious education. All your care and endeavours ought to be employed, in forming them *for the Lord*, by laying a restraint upon the first appearance

ance of any vicious passion, and nourishing them up in the words of faith and good doctrine.* Catechising has been found of excellent use in this respect, though it is now, alas! too much neglected. Educate your children, as if the apostle had said, under such discipline and instruction as may lead them to the knowledge of the religion of Christ, and most effectually dispose them to embrace and practise it. These are the great ends to be aimed at, and constantly kept in view.

Teach your children to remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy, not daring to profane it by sports or diversions; or wasting the hours of it in folly and vanity. Convince them, that they are under indispensable obligation to regard the divine command, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary." Bring them regularly to the house of God with you, and never suffer them to neglect the appointed seasons of public instruction, except in extraordinary cases.—Train them up in this way; it is the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it. It is awful to think how some professing christians suffer their children to profane the Lord's-day, and neglect the means of salvation. It is the *nurture of the Lord*, and the *admonition of the Lord*, in which children are to be brought up; and surely this implies, that no means should be neglected which have a tendency to bring them to a true acquaintance with Him, as the proper object of faith, hope, love, reverence, and obedience.

* Doddridge.

ence. To know the only true God and his Son Jesus Christ, in a proper manner, is life eternal.

Children are the hope of the rising age. The divine care is particularly manifested towards them, in requiring you, fathers and mothers, to add to all the other tokens of kindness which you owe to your dear offspring, that of communicating to them the knowledge of himself, his word, and the way of salvation. You are the instruments he is pleased to employ in this great work ; and you are encouraged to expect his blessing to attend your affectionate and persevering exertions.

Read the solemn charge which he gives you, Deut. vi. 6, 7. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Means are here prescribed for keeping up religion, both in your hearts and your houses. These words shall be in thine heart, that thy thoughts may be daily conversant with them, and employed about them ; that so thou mayest live and walk under the influence and impression of them. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children ; frequently repeat them to thy tender charge, and try all ways of instilling religious knowledge into their minds. The leading truths of God's word are so plain, and the way of life so clear, that every father may, by due attention, instruct his sons in them, and every mother,

ther, her daughters. Those good things which are committed to them, they should use their best endeavours to transmit to their offspring. They should talk of these things to their children, when they sit in the house, at work, at meat, or at rest; and when they walk by the way, for exercise or amusement. When they are going to retire and lie down, they should leave impressions of these things on their young families, and when they rise up and return to them, they should still be speaking of the words of everlasting life; that they may be continually training up their children in the way they should go. Thus *Timothy* was trained up, by those pious women, his grandmother, and his own mother; so that from a child, or from infancy, as the word signifies, he knew the holy scriptures, which were able to make him wise to salvation. Hence it is evident, that by the assiduous care of parents, little-children may learn many useful lessons from scripture, and be very early initiated into the knowledge of themselves, and of Jesus Christ.

If you would train up your children in the way they should go, you must resolve with Joshua, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." Where God is not acknowledged in a family, where his word is not read, nor joint supplications offered up to him, it must be evident to every serious mind, that the children in such a family are not trained up in the way they should go. That is, they are not trained up in the worship and service of their Maker. O that every father of a prayerless family would consider those awful words, "Pour out thy fury on the heathen that
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know thee not, and on the families that call not upon thy name." There are, alas ! multitudes of such families to be found among us, though we live in what is called a christian country. Children should be taught to pray for themselves, impressed with a sense of the necessity and importance of it, and they should be habituated to the exercise, by the daily devotions of the family where they reside. Let the father and mother "live together as heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers" together, and with their children, "be not hindered." It is of great importance in the *training* required.

If you have hitherto been negligent in the important duties of family religion, let the time past suffice. Consider the worth of the souls under your care. Begin, through grace, to honour God in your families, and to teach your children to know, and to fear and serve him. This is surely the way in which they should go. You cannot deny it. You cannot surely be insensible of it. Call your children and other domestics together every day ; read some part of the word of God to them, give a hint or two respecting the meaning and importance of what you read, as you are enabled ; and spend a few minutes with them in confessions of sin, supplications for mercy, and thanksgivings for benefits received. This will take up little of your time ; but it will be attended with great advantage to yourselves, and those under your inspection.

Family worship is one way, perhaps the most effectual one, of teaching children to serve God. In this exercise

exercise, they learn the language of *Canaan* by imperceptible degrees, a little one day, and a little another. They may gradually be impressed with a proper sense of the divine perfections, while they hear their parent daily adoring and magnifying the wisdom, the power, the mercy, and the goodness of the great Former of all things. Their hearts may be touched with remorse, while they hear him make humble confession of his own sins, and the sins of his children and family. They may know what mercies they have to ask of God for themselves, while they hear the petitions which are offered up by their parents for them. While he is making intercession to the Almighty for the conversion of sinners, the peace and prosperity of the church, the good of the country, and the safety, honour, and happiness of the king, they may feel their young minds expanded and enlarged in behalf of these several subjects. While they hear their parent daily expressing his hope, his joy and confidence in Christ Jesus, they may learn where to look for salvation themselves.

Thus, when to the lessons of instruction you frequently give them relative to their eternal interests, you add the daily exercises of domestic devotion, you are training them up in the knowledge of God and his service, that is, in the way they should go. But if all this be neglected, the poor children may perish in sin and ignorance; but O! their blood will be required at the hands of the parents, who have not warned them of their danger, nor taught them the way to safety.

I have often been greatly affected with the following

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ing passage, written by a pious and celebrated author, who is long since numbered with the dead ; and though the book is in many hands, I will beg leave here to transcribe a short extract from it.

‘ From this affecting representation, let parents be convinced, how highly it concerns them to cultivate the morals of their children, and use their utmost endeavours to secure their immortal interests. If you really love the offspring of your own bodies ; if your bowels yearn over those amiable pledges of conjugal endearment ; spare no pains : give all diligence, I entreat you, to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Then may you have joy in their life, or consolation in their death. If their span is prolonged, their unblamable and useful conduct will be the staff of your age, and the balm of declining nature. Or, if the number of their years be cut off in the midst, you may commit their remains to the dust, with much the same comfortable expectations, as you send the survivors to places of genteel education. You may commit them to the dust, with cheering hopes of receiving them again to your arms, inexpressibly improved in every noble and endearing accomplishment.’

‘ It is certainly a severe trial, and much more afflictive than I am able to imagine, to resign a lovely blooming creature, sprung from your own loins, to the gloomy recesses of corruption. Thus to resign him, after having been long dandled upon your knees, united to your affections by a thousand ties of tenderness ; and now become both the delight of your eyes, and the support of your family ?—to have such a one torn from

your bosom, and thrown into darkness, doubtless, it must be like a dagger to your hearts.—But O! how much more cutting to you, and confounding to the child, to have the soul separated from God, and, for shameful ignorance, or early impiety, transmitted to a place of eternal torment! How would it aggravate your distress, and add a distracting emphasis to all your sighs, if you should follow the pale corpse with these bitter reflections!

“ This dear creature, though long ago capable of knowing good from evil, is gone out of the world, before he had learned the great design of coming into it. A short-lived momentary existence it received from me; but no good instructions, no holy admonitions, nothing to further its well-being in that everlasting state, upon which it is now entered! The poor body is consigned to the coffin, and carried out to consume away in the cold and silent grave. And what reason have I to suppose that the precious soul is in a better condition? May I not justly fear, that, sentenced by the righteous Judge, it is going, or gone away, into the pains of endless punishment!—Perhaps, while I am bewailing its untimely departure, it may be cursing, in utter darkness, that ever to be deplored, that most calamitous day, when it was born of such a careless, such an ungodly parent, as I have been!”

‘ Nothing, I think, but the gnawings of the worm that never dies, can equal the anguish of these self-condemning thoughts. The tortures of a rack must be an easy suffering, compared with the stings and horror of such remorse. How earnestly do I wish, that as
many

many as are intrusted with the management of children would take timely care to prevent these scourges of conscience, by endeavouring to conduct their minds into an early knowledge of Christ, and a cordial love to his truth.*

SECTION 2.

2. **T**RAIN up a child in acts of justice and honesty towards his fellow-creatures. Shew him what is right and what is wrong between man and man, between himself and his companions, or between himself and his brothers and sisters. Train him up in the hatred of all dishonest practices, in every part of his conduct, and in every place where he comes. Shew him the meaning and the importance of those divine prohibitions, "Thou shalt not covet" that which is another's property, "Thou shalt not steal." By constant warnings and instructions on this head, labour that the principles of honesty and integrity be firmly fixed in his mind. Ask him if he undersand that sacred and golden rule, which deserves to be engraved on the fleshly table of every man's heart, and of every child's heart too, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

I am inclined to think, there is a sad neglect in some parents on this head. Children are suffered to

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* Hervey's Medit. among the Tombs.

pilfer from their companions, and from their parents, in little things with impunity. There is a propensity in some children to faults of this kind, and when they pass undetected, or unpunished, they are emboldened to go on; and who knows where the mischief may end? If a child is dishonest, what can be expected from him when he becomes a man?

Many do wrong at first for want of better information. They seem to have no proper ideas of what is right and what is wrong; what is just, and what is unjust. If you would teach your child to be honest, you must tell him what it is to be so, that he may not sin through ignorance. If a child is detected in any act of injustice, he ought to be severely reprimanded. The matter should be set before him in all its odious colours, as most hateful to God, and most scandalous in the eyes of men. A second offence of this kind demands, not only sharp rebukes, but proper chastisement. A rod is for the back of such a fool. We should not have so many unjust and unrighteous persons in the world, if proper care were taken to check the first appearance of a fraudulent disposition in children. But in this, as in other respects, "A child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame."

SECTION III.

3. **T**RAIN up a child in habits of tenderness, kindness and compassion. Check every appearance of cruelty in him; discountenance all hard-heartedness to any living creature. Never suffer him to torture,

ture, abuse, or kill the meanest animal for sport or pleasure. This would tend to make him unfeeling towards his fellow mortals in distress. Such a child might grow up to be a *Nimrod*; to be cruel and oppressive when a man. He that in childhood is suffered to torture and torment a fly, or a beetle, for mere recreation and diversion, may, in time, like those tyrants which make the earth to tremble, count it a light matter to wallow in human blood. The oppressors of mankind, the *Neros* of every age, I suppose, began their horrible career, by acts of wanton mischief, plaguing and tormenting those little animals in their childhood, which could make no resistance. It was the sport of *Nero*, to pierce flies with a bodkin; for "it is a sport to a fool to do mischief."

Check every appearance of this most hateful disposition in your child. Teach him to be merciful, pitiful and tender-hearted. Teach him to melt at another's woe, and to weep "with those that weep." Train him up in an everlasting abhorrence of all acts of cruelty and unkindness. Convince him, that a malignant disposition is truly diabolical. Employ him in executing little offices of kindness, humanity and charity. Train him up in this way, it is the way he should go. Remind him often of the words of Him who exhibited a perfect pattern of tenderness, mildness and compassion, through the whole of his life on earth, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" but "He shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy."

SECTION IV.

4. **T**RAIN up the child to speak the truth on all occasions. There is no vice to which children discover a more early propensity than to lying. "They go astray as soon as born, speaking lies" as soon almost as they are capable of using their tongues. The lies which are told in their hearing, in common conversation, are a great inducement to them to think lightly of this evil, as soon as they are capable of reflection. The greatest care should be taken to avoid setting before them a bad example, in this, as in all other things. Let them never hear from yourselves, or from any about you, if you can prevent it, any thing which borders upon falsehood. "He that telleth lies," says David, "shall not tarry in my sight," particularly, lest the bad examples should corrupt the minds of my children.

Lying is a ready and cheap cover for a fault which has been committed. And it is so common a vice, that without the greatest care, a child can hardly be kept from falling into it. It should be always spoken of before a child, when there is occasion to mention it, with the utmost detestation and abhorrence. It is so inconsistent with the character of a wise and honest man, that no person, of any credit, can bear the imputation of a lie. To call a man a liar, is deemed the greatest affront that can be given.

Often tell your children, that to be in the habit of lying, is the greatest disgrace; and what debases a
man

man to the lowest degree. Such a one is avoided by people of any reputation in the world, and will not be believed though he should speak the truth. Tell them, that he who commits a fault, and invents a lie to hide it, doubles the offence. Tell them, that falsehood is easily detected, for "a lying tongue is but for a moment;" and the fault of such a one is "found to be hateful." Tell them that the great God, with whom they have to do, is a God of truth, and "abhors a lying tongue:—that *Gehazi* was afflicted with a leprosy to the day of his death, for inventing a lie to cloak his offence;—that *Ananias* and his wife were both struck dead for contriving and telling a lie; and it was Satan that filled their hearts to do it; for he is "the father of lies." Tell them that "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," stands excluded from the heavenly world; nay more, that "all" habitual "liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

Train up a child in the love of truth, openness and sincerity, and in a just abhorrence of the contrary. The first time you find a child guilty of inventing a lie, let him be sharply reprov'd. Shew him, that you are surprized and astonished beyond measure, to find that he should be so depraved, as to be guilty of so degrading, so base, so mean, so horrible a thing. If this does not prevent him from relapsing into the same offence again, give him to understand, that he is fallen into a state of very great displeasure with you. He ought to be kept at a distance for some time, and to undergo proper correction. "For he" that in such a case, "spareth his rod, hateth his son, but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes."

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But if the child, when he has committed a fault, openly confess when he is charged with it, you ought to forgive the offence freely, and to commend him for his openness and honesty. This will encourage him to speak the truth in future.

SECTION V.

5. **T**RAIN up a child in a just abhorrence of all profane and impious language. It is greatly to be lamented, that ever a child should hear the language of profaneness. But such is the degeneracy of the age, that children too often hear the voice of cursing and swearing. In every street, and every public road, the ears of serious persons are shocked, and their hearts pained, by hearing, not only such as are grown up, but the young, and even children, pouring out language more horrible than hell itself. That great and terrible name, **THE LORD THY GOD**, is continually every day blasphemed by multitudes, both of men and children. Are these children trained up in the way they should go? Are they not trained up for certain destruction? How tremendous an account must those parents and masters have to give hereafter, who do not restrain the children under their care, from such wickedness, such daring irreverence of the Majesty of heaven?

The blasphemer, under the law, was ordered to be stoned to death. The wholesome laws of our nation condemn the practice of profane swearing and cursing, but, alas! those laws lie dormant, and are very rarely

rarely executed. O ye parents, if you have the least degree of the fear of God before your eyes, use all your care, and all your authority to prevent your children from hearing, and from imitating those sons of Belial, whose tongues are perpetually shooting arrows of profaneness against the heavens.

These poor unhappy men and children little consider what that damnation is, which they are so often calling for, upon themselves and others. They do not consider, that it is more awful than words can express, or thought conceive ; that it is to suffer agonies far exceeding the most dreadful punishment that can be endured in this world, and that without any hope of redemption. This is the punishment to which they are daily and hourly wishing that themselves and others may be condemned. Poor souls, if they are not brought to repentance, that awful Being, whose power they so daringly defy, will very soon take them at their word, and make them feel all the horrors of that damnation which they have so often, and so wantonly called for, in those regions of darkness and despair, where “there shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.” This will be no more than what their horrid crimes and blasphemies have deserved. The God, “with whom is terrible majesty,” will thus effectually convince them, that he will not hold the man “guiltless who taketh his name in vain.

In a word, in a place where such profaneness abounds, how great is the difficulty of training up a child in the way he should go ? Where the very breath of the multitude is pestilential, how shall the poor child
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be kept from the infection? I tremble for the rising generation. O that parents and tutors may be excited to put the strongest restraints on those who are under their care. Never suffer them to utter words which border on profaneness. Often talk to them on the subject. Caution and warn them daily. Keep them, as much as possible, from hearing the blasphemies of the sons of darkness, and tell them of the danger they are in of being corrupted by the contagion of their evil example. Teach them to fear that awful Being whose eye is ever upon them. Tell them, that the common use of profane language is the strongest proof of a man being destitute of the fear of God, and in the way to destruction. Tell them, that "heaven and earth are full of the majesty of God's glory," that he is every where present, and a constant witness to every word they speak, as well as to every work they do; and that "for every idle word," much more, for every profane one, "they must give account in the day of judgment."

SECTION VI.

6. **T**RAIN up a child in obedience to just authority. As he should be taught to obey God, so also to honour the king, to respect the laws of his native country, to give honour to whom honour is due, and fear to whom fear. He should be constantly required to yield submissive obedience to those to whose care he is committed, for his instruction and government; particularly inculcate upon his mind, the great duty of "obeying his parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord."

Lord." "Honour thy father and thy mother, is the first commandment with promise." The curse of the living God is denounced against him "that setteth light by his father or his mother."

If you would induce the child to obey your commands, and follow your advice and instructions, you must be careful to keep your place, and maintain your authority. You must do nothing which may tempt the child to set light by you, or to think meanly of you.— Avoid every thing silly and mean in his presence; but speak and act in such a manner as to secure his reverence of you, and to engage his esteem and love. This requires great circumspection.

Parental authority is maintained by observing a happy medium between too much lenity on the one hand, and too much severity on the other. The affections of the child should be secured, if possible.— When this is done, a very important point is gained, in the business of education. Then the child will consider his father and his mother as his best friends, and hearken to them accordingly. Much of the same may be said of a judicious tutor, to whom the education of youth is intrusted.

The severity of a tyrannical parent or master, may be productive of much mischief to his tender charge. Youths of a generous disposition may be induced to do any thing by kindness; but severity would rouse and harden them into opposition. To be perpetually scolding them and chiding them, is not the way to keep up your authority over them. They will consider

consider this as a thing of course, and soon be tempted to disregard it. To be very frequently striking or beating them for every slight offence, would have a natural tendency to stir up their resentment against you, and lead them to consider you as their greatest enemies. You would then lose their esteem and affection, and weaken instead of strengthen your authority over them, which is so necessary to their proper government.

The infliction of chastisement requires great prudence, and a happy command of temper. That it may produce the desired effect, it should at least appear to flow from a just displeasure at the offence committed. But for a parent or tutor not to be able to command his passion, would be to set a bad example before children. He would lose their esteem, by shewing his weakness before them; for it is a great weakness in an instructor to be often overcome by the impulse of anger.

It must be owned, that few persons meet with more frequent provocations than those who have a number of children to manage and govern. If such do not check the risings of anger, they will find it grow upon them, and become habitual. This would make their own lives very uncomfortable, and lead them to sudden acts of cruelty and barbarity, of which they might immediately repent, but in vain. Slight expressions of displeasure or approbation, will produce happy effects on children of a meek and tender disposition. A frowning look, a nod of the head, or a sharp word, will succeed better with such, as a corrective, than
many

many stripes with others. Praise and shame will frequently be found to answer the parent's purpose; but vice and immorality, idleness and mischief, will, at times, require the rod of correction. Children must not be suffered to walk in the way of their own heart, but be trained up in the way they should go. At any rate, the fertile soil must not be uncultivated or covered with noxious weeds.

As severity is ever to be condemned, so an excess of lenity is not less pernicious. It is an ancient rule, and which has received the sanction of experience in every age; "Chasten thy son while there is hope; and let not thy soul spare for his crying." When lenity and softness are ill judged, they are in effect cruelty. An ancient writer* has justly observed, that impunity is the greatest enticement to the commission of offences.

Experience shews that parental authority may be weakened, and the tempers of children spoiled, either by an excess of lenity or of severity. The golden mean between the two extremes is the safest path.— "Provoke not children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Severity may bear down and break their spirits. Lenity on the other hand, is amiable. The motives to it are noble. Much may be said in its praise, and the advocates for it will find an attentive audience. Yet lenity carried to an undue degree, frequently involves the objects of it in misery and perdition. We have, alas! too many examples of this.

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* Cicero.

Human nature is, at every stage of life, prone to evil; and particularly so at a time, when, to inherent depravity are added, weakness of understanding, and want of thought and experience; which is the case with all our young offspring. In order to maintain proper authority, and to keep them in due subjection, proper methods must be devised, of influencing the hopes and fears of children; and these methods must be accommodated to their different dispositions. Wisdom is profitable to direct.*

SECTION VII.

7. **T**RAIN up the child to habits of industry. Do not bring him up in idleness, but teach him to comply with the divine appointment, that is, to “earn his bread with the sweat of his brow.” Parents in ancient times, who gave their children all the advantages of a liberal education, would have them also instructed in some useful branch of business, to prevent them from spending any part of their youthful days in idleness. By this means, if any change of circumstances should attend them in passing through life, they were rendered capable of getting their bread. Thus the apostle *Paul*, who with all the stores of learning, treasured up in his youthful days, was instructed in the business of tent-making, and found the benefit of it in that state of poverty and persecution, to which he cheerfully submitted for the gospel’s sake.

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* See the Author’s Essay on Anger, page 172.

Among the lower classes of people, industry is absolutely necessary, and idleness is entirely inexcusable. The way in which your child should go, is not the way of laziness, sloth, and indolence, wasting life in impertinence and folly; but the way of diligence and activity. Train him up to it; exercise him in it; and begin betimes. Keep him at school or at work.—Get him all the learning you can afford. Especially, let him be instructed in reading, in writing, and in keeping accounts. These acquisitions are easy, and very important, very requisite to render him useful and respectable in passing through life. Without these acquirements in early life, what disadvantages will he always labour under? Where so many advantages are gratuitously afforded for the purpose, what pity is it that any grown man or woman among us should have occasion to make the shameful acknowledgment, ‘I cannot read, I cannot write!’ How much time were these persons suffered to spend in idleness when children, to their great loss, and the disgrace of their parents, which might have been employed for the purpose we mention.

If you desire your child to be useful to himself, to be useful to you, to be useful and respectable in the world, and not a burden to society, train him to diligence in some proper employment, and in the acquirement of the most necessary branches of learning, to the extent of your ability. “The hand of the diligent maketh rich.—Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand

before mean men. The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, but the slothful shall be under tribute."

SECTION VIII.

8. **T**RAIN up a child in the proper government of himself, his humours and passions. It can never be right for a parent to be always crossing, vexing, and disappointing his child, in what he wishes to enjoy. "Fathers provoke not your children to anger," by a rigorous severity, and refusing to grant them what is reasonable and proper; do not exasperate their irritable passions by an unkind and over-bearing behaviour, "lest they be discouraged," and their minds begin to entertain prejudices against religion. Care should be taken not to bear too hard on their tender minds. Grant them such things as it is proper for them to ask, and you to give.

But the wants of children are often the wants of fancy, of humour, or of caprice. In such cases, it is the parent's duty to deny the child what he eagerly craves, and passionately longs to possess. Children must not have their humour in every thing which comes into their heads. This would be the way to spoil and ruin them. *Absalom* said, "O that I were made judge in the land!"—A most improper and unreasonable passion, and we see that it brought him to destruction. Children should be taught to restrain their appetites, to set bounds to their wishes, and to know that their parents, who are appointed of God to govern them, know much better what is proper for them

them than they do themselves. Every appearance of self-willedness, and of stubbornness, must be checked. —They must not be indulged in their pride, their peevish humours, and sullenness of temper, and other irregular passions, lest they should ruin their own comfort in this life, and destroy their souls in that which is to come. The judicious parent will have frequent occasion to exercise his authority in many cases of this kind ; but it may be done with gentleness, meekness and love. The child should be informed of the unreasonableness, the folly, and impropriety of granting him his humour, in this and the other case.—The parent may say, My dear, do not think of such a thing ; it is not proper for you, it does not consist with my circumstances, and the like. These observations are applicable to meats and drinks, to toys and trinkets, to fine clothes, money for spending upon trifles, and many other whims which come into a child's head. The child should be taught by degrees to deny himself, and to govern himself, otherwise, the consequences may be very serious. I lately heard of a youth of a fiery disposition, who being always accustomed to be treated with indulgence, grew up to such a degree of self-willedness, that on meeting with some opposition when grown up, he could not bear to be controuled, but took a loaded pistol and shot himself dead.

SECTION IX.

9. **T**RAIN up a child in good manners, and a decent behaviour towards all with whom he has to do. Among the lower ranks of people, for whose benefit this little tract is principally intended, there is a very great deficiency in this respect, in the education of their children. This is apparent even in families professing godliness. Some religious parents do not consider it as a matter of much consequence. It must be owned there are other things of greater weight, such as we have mentioned in the former part of this discourse. But good manners are amiable, lovely, and engaging. A clownish child, whose manners are uncultivated, is no credit to his parents, nor will he gain that respect among mankind which his parents perhaps could wish him to do.

Indeed, without continual admonition, children will not behave with any degree of decency and respect even to their own parents. They will not give that honour to their father and mother which God requires them to do, without daily instruction. But that instruction should by no means be withheld. "Line upon line, and precept upon precept" are necessary in this case. When you have admonished your children a hundred times, you will find it needful to do it again. Never be weary in this kind of well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not. When your children have occasion to ask you for any thing, never comply unless they ask in a decent manner. It must
not

not be, *Give me this*, or *I want that*; but, If you please, or I pray you. When you are speaking to a child, and he does not distinctly hear you, the common word in the child's mouth is, *WHAT?* this is rude and indecent. He should be taught to say, I did not hear you, father; or, I do not understand you, mother.

Never suffer your children to treat one another in a rude, brutish, and unkind manner. It is ungraceful and unbecoming. Quarrelling, brawling, fighting, and calling ill-names, should never be allowed. It requires great care and constant inspection to prevent these things; for children are prone to rudeness at all times; and the bad examples which are continually before their eyes, in families where no order is regarded, are very pernicious. It is shocking to come into a family where all the rudeness of the clown is tolerated from day to day. How unpleasant, how disgusting, how degrading to the parents! We talk of civilization, but it is greatly wanting among us, as well as among *Hottentots* and wild *Arabs*. On the other hand, how pleasing, how charming is it, to visit a well governed family; where decency of behaviour prevails, where the children are in due subjection to their parents, with all gravity; where all are mutually happy in the company of one another; and where kind designs to serve and please one another, run through all their actions! This is a lovely, a charming sight; and will gladden the heart of every visitor of discernment and sensibility. Be the family ever so poor, he will quit their abode with pleasing sensations, and retain a most respectful remembrance of them.

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When your children are sent abroad upon any little matter of business, or otherwise, they should be taught to address their neighbours and friends, not with the roughness and rudeness of a clown, whose manners are wholly uncultivated ; but to speak to every one with respect and decency. To ask a question, or solicit a favour, in a proper manner, and to give answers accordingly to every one with whom they speak. Many children are rude and brutish in their address and manner, because they know no better. They have never been trained, never taught how to speak, or what to say. Their behaviour is disgusting wherever they come, and their parents have a large share in their disgrace. For your own credit, and for the credit of your children in the world, train them up in civility and good behaviour. “ Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things,” and teach them diligently to your children.

SECTION X.

10. **T**RAIN up a child not only by precept but by example. The words of the psalmist *David*, with respect to this, are very expressive. Psal. ci. 2. “ I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way—I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.” God almighty grant that every reader of this discourse may be enabled to form the like resolution, and to put it in practice ! O that I could prevail with those whom I address, in this one important point. I must soon leave the world,

world, the time of my departure is at hand; this one thing I request of you before I die, that you would use your best endeavours to train up your children in the way they should go, not only by instruction, but by your own example!

I speak not to fathers only, though they should rule in their own houses, but I speak to mothers also. While children are very young, they are chiefly their mother's care. And when the father is obliged to be absent upon business, the mother is to fill up his place. I fear many, very many children are ruined through the foolish indulgence, ill conduct, and imprudence of the mother. In the history of the old testament, when the actions of a wicked king are enumerated, we are presently told who was his mother. This seems a kind of censure upon her, for not training him up in a better way. O ye mothers, a great deal depends upon you, in regard to the success of the work of education. Observe the case of the amiable *Timothy*. How happily successful were the good instructions, and the pious example of his grandmother and his mother! It is left on record to their everlasting honour, and to give direction and encouragement to mothers and grandmothers in every succeeding age. It is happiest indeed, when fathers and mothers are perfectly harmonious in the business of education. When both draw in one yoke, and act in concert; without jarring or opposing one another. For nothing retards the success of the business more, or has a more unhappy effect on the minds of the young family, than jarring between the parents. They should both unite in the measures to be

be pursued, and both join, like *Manoah* and his wife, in asking of the Lord, "How shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him." And they should both agree to confirm their precepts by their own example.

Let it be ever remembered, that your children will sooner copy after your example than follow your injunctions. Rules of conduct given to them, will be of little use, if they observe you neglecting those rules in your general conduct. Be careful of every thing you say and do before them. An ancient writer has justly remarked, *that great reverence is due to children.** His meaning is, that we should avoid every thing before them, which would have a tendency to give a wrong bias to their minds, or lead them into any error in their conduct.

Train up your children by a lovely, humble, kind, peaceable, and holy example; that you may be able to say, "Whatsoever ye have observed, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ."

If you would teach your children to serve and worship God, you must serve and worship him yourselves; otherwise, you teach them in vain. If you would train them up in habits of industry, you should not live in idleness yourselves. If you would teach them to be kind, tender, and merciful, you must practise these virtues before their eyes. If you would teach them to curb their passions, you must curb your own, and live a life of self-denial. If you would have them always to speak the truth, you must avoid every thing in your
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* *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.*———*Juven.*

own discourse that has the least appearance of falsehood. If you would have them to abhor profane language, you must be governed by that divine rule yourselves, "Above all things, my brethren, swear not." If you would train them up in honesty and integrity of life, you must be able to say, "We trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." If you would teach your children good manners, you will never be successful, unless you shew them the example.

And here the great defect lies. The rising generation is awfully corrupt and vain. My very heart is pained within me at the sight. And the depravity of children and youth is, in a great measure, owing to the want of a proper education. Ye parents, a great deal of the sin and folly of your children lies at your door. They make themselves vile, and you do not restrain them.

O consider, how much of the glory of God, how much of your own happiness, and that of your own dear children, for time and eternity, depends on what is here recommended to your attention. The subject affords abundant matter for a considerable volume; and indeed, many volumes have been written upon it, by serious ministers of various denominations; but as their books may not be at hand, I humbly hope these plain hints will not be disregarded. I trust, indeed, there are many who may cast their eyes on these pages, who are deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of what is here recommended. The subject is not new to them. Such will, I hope, be confirmed in
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the way of duty, and excited to promote attention to it in others with whom they are connected.

And now to draw to a conclusion; if proper endeavours be used in training up children in the way they should go, there is a hope of success; when they are old they will not depart from it. Good impressions made upon them in their youth, will abide with them all their lives, even to old age. The vessel retains the savour with which it was first seasoned. Indeed, with some, the labour seems, for a time, to be lost; but sooner or later, through the blessing of the Almighty, it is to be hoped some fruit will appear. We must not attribute too much to the means, but look up to heaven for success. "In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper or whether they both shall be alike good." In this work, patience and perseverance are especially necessary. This is the best way of shewing your love to your children; a thousand times more so than laying up portions for them. Do you promise yourselves comfort in your children? Then train them up for God and heaven. But if you shew no care about this, but suffer your children to walk in the way of their own heart, you bring them up to nothing but shame and misery in this world; and, if a miracle of mercy do not prevent it, to everlasting destruction in the next.

THE END.





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